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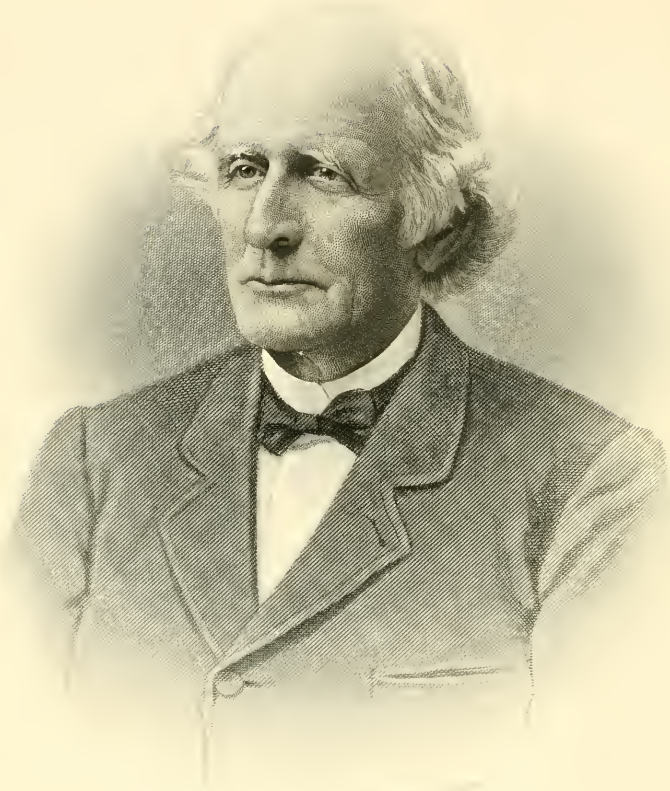

S. F. Gifford

A

MEMORIAL

OF

STEPHEN NYE GIFFORD,

CLERK OF THE MASSACHUSETTS SENATE

FROM

JANUARY 6, 1858, TO APRIL 18, 1886.

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In Honor

OF THE FAITHFUL SERVICE OF A TRUE MAN, WHO FOR MANY YEARS
ADORNED THE TRUST REPOSED IN HIM BY EVERY QUALITY
WHICH SHOULD DISTINGUISH THE PUBLIC SERVICE AND
EVERY GRACE OF CHARACTER WHICH COULD
ATTACH HIM TO HIS ASSOCIATES.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

SENATE, April 27, 1886.

On motion of Mr. COGSWELL:

ORDERED, That the resolutions on the death of the late clerk of this body, the Honorable STEPHEN N. GIFFORD, together with the remarks on the adoption of the same, be entered in full upon the Journal of the Senate.

E. HERBERT CLAPP,
Clerk pro tem.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

SENATE, April 28, 1886.

On motion of Mr. COGSWELL:

ORDERED, That the committee on Resolutions concerning the death of the Honorable STEPHEN N. GIFFORD, be authorized to have published in suitable form, and in such numbers as said committee may see fit, copies of the resolutions recently adopted by the Senate, together with the remarks in support of the same.

E. HERBERT CLAPP,
Clerk pro tem.

ANNOUNCEMENT

OF THE

DEATH OF STEPHEN N. GIFFORD,

CLERK OF THE MASSACHUSETTS SENATE.

At the opening of the Senate, Monday, April 19, 1886, the President announced the death of the Hon. STEPHEN N. GIFFORD, its clerk, which took place at his home in Duxbury, on Sunday, April 18, at quarter before four o'clock, P. M.

Thereupon the following resolutions were offered by Mr. LILLEY of Middlesex, and were unanimously adopted: —

Whereas, The Senate has learned with profound sorrow of the death of its late clerk, Hon. STEPHEN N. GIFFORD; therefore, it is

Resolved, That a committee to consist of five members be appointed to draft and present to the Senate resolutions expressive of its appreciation of the character and services of the deceased; and it is further

Resolved, That, as a mark of respect to his memory, the Senate attend the funeral services to be held at Duxbury on Wednesday, the 21st inst., and that the President communicate to His Excellency the Governor and to the Honorable House of Representatives intelligence of the death of the late clerk, and an invitation to be represented at the funeral services.

Messrs. Lilley, Howland, Nourse, Wilbur and Douglas are appointed the committee to draft and present resolutions.

E. HERBERT CLAPP,
Clerk pro tem.

PROCEEDINGS IN THE SENATE,

APRIL 27, 1886.

Rev. EDMUND DOWSE, Chaplain to the Senate, offered the following

PRAYER.

Almighty God, we thank Thee at this time for all the felicities of domestic, social and civil life; and we thank Thee more especially that our friends and associates, their characters and their lives, are so photographed upon our minds and hearts that though they are absent yet we think of them, speak of them, enjoy them and honor them as though they were still present with us. Our Heavenly Father, this draped chair and these bereaved friends, and these tokens of sadness and affection now before us, remind us that the time-honored clerk of this body has passed away, never to return to his position again. And yet he seems to be present with us this day in all his native modesty and excellence. Grant Thy blessing to rest now upon the members of this Senate, and as to-day they may turn aside from their accustomed business to pay a fitting tribute of respect and honor to the departed, we pray that Thou wilt indite their thoughts and feelings and speech,

and so order everything that all shall be appropriate, — alike honorable to the dead, salutary in its influence upon the living, and acceptable to Thee. And while we stand in Thy presence we will not forget the absent, bereaved and afflicted family. Impart unto them heavenly comfort and consolation, and prepare them for all Thy righteousness; and Thine shall be the praise for ever. Amen.

Mr. LILLEY, from the committee appointed to draft and present to the Senate resolutions expressive of its appreciation of the character and services of its late clerk, STEPHEN N. GIFFORD, reported the accompanying

RESOLUTIONS.

WHEREAS, the Senate is deeply grieved by the death of its late clerk, STEPHEN N. GIFFORD, and desires to give enduring expression to its appreciation of his high character, and his eminent services as a public official; therefore it is

Resolved, That by his death the Senate loses an invaluable officer, who during twenty-nine consecutive years has with rare intelligence, fidelity and unfailing courtesy facilitated its labors, and the Commonwealth loses a zealous public servant and an exemplary citizen.

Resolved, That the Senate commends the example presented by his long and honorable career to all who aspire to render unselfish and patriotic service to their fellow-citizens and the State.

Resolved, That a copy of these resolutions be forthwith transmitted to the family of the late clerk, to whom the Senate extends its profound sympathy in their bereavement.

The resolutions having been read, remarks were made thereon as follows.

Senator Lilley of Middlesex.

Mr. President, — Occasions like this remind us that the deepest emotions of the heart find halting expression in the language of the lips. As one who stands on the shore of the boundless sea, or seeks to scale with straining vision the snow-clad summits of the everlasting hills, so I stand in contemplation of the career which we honor to-day, deeply sensible that the tribute which I bring is inadequate, and that it would be wholly unworthy of acceptance, but for the respect and affection by which it is prompted.

Stephen N. Gifford was born July 21, 1815. For full threescore years and ten he lived and wrought with our fathers and with us; discharging every duty with fidelity, and adorning every station to which he was called. While he was still in the active service of the Commonwealth which he loved so well, the shadows of the night forbade further labor, and he turned his footsteps homeward, bearing the sheaves of a long, busy and honorable life. The announcement of the death

of this plain, old-fashioned gentleman, unheralded as it was by a single note of alarm, caused as profound a shock and as wide a sense of personal loss as would be occasioned by the death of the most eminent man in public life in Massachusetts to-day. What memories it aroused! How the mind traversed the period of his life and noted the marvellous events which it embraced, in many of which he bore a conspicuous part. Born in the year which was marked by brilliant achievements of American arms on land and sea, and which closed the second war of the Republic, he saw the nation advance with wondrous strides to unexampled prosperity and power; he saw its population increase from eight to more than fifty millions; he saw twenty sovereign States take their places in the Union, and he witnessed the great struggles relating to slavery under the Constitution which began with the Missouri Compromise and ended with the surrender of Lee at Appomattox, and among the giants who engaged in them he counted many personal friends. Looking back through twenty-nine years, we see him called in his early manhood to the office of clerk of the Senate. He brought to the discharge of its duties

an invaluable experience as a teacher and legislator, the culture of the scholar, and, better than all, a knightly courtesy whose well-spring was the heart, and which led all who saw it and felt its influence to accord to him

"The grand old name of gentleman."

Thenceforth we find him so inseparably associated with every step taken by the Commonwealth that the omission of his name would render its history incomplete. In the most important era of its existence, it was for him to witness and record every act by which, with the blood of fifteen thousand of its citizens, and with thirty millions of treasure, it sealed its devotion to republican government, and, to quote his own sentiment, gave fullest meaning to the declaration, "All men are created equal." In his lifetime the slave power had risen to gigantic proportions; crushing whom it could not conciliate, it imperiously claimed the land for its dominion. He saw the beginning and the growth of the anti-slavery movement; and it was his high duty — oh, crown of fame! — to attest Massachusetts' ratification of that new Magna Charta which

does indeed "proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof."

Twenty-nine years of incessant, arduous, faithful public service, unmarred by a single act or word which the most exacting would recall; this is the legacy left in our keeping, and in the keeping of our successors. Let us cherish it, Mr. President, in the spirit of loyalty with which he served, and, if need be, defended the department of the government whose honored servant he was. No man was ever truer to the object of his allegiance than was Stephen N. Gifford to the General Court. Gentle though he was, he quickly and firmly resented any reflection upon it, or any attempt to limit its prerogatives. He had no patience with that flippant and unfair style of criticism of public bodies and public men which has of late so extensively prevailed. It is but a short time since, that in the presence of a most distinguished company that had assembled in his honor, he said: "I say that the character of Massachusetts, here and everywhere, where it is known, is due to the honesty, the fidelity, the industry of the General Court. I say further, and I know whereof I speak, that the members

of the Massachusetts legislature, those who manage the business, work harder, work more hours, than they would in their own business at home." His conception of public service was that of the old-fashioned school. To him it was honorable; nay, exalted. Through frequent repetition his duties might become commonplace, nevertheless, he was ever mindful that he was the servant of the State, and it commanded his best efforts to the end. According to his custom, he completed his daily record of the proceedings of the Senate before he ceased labor, and in such an advanced condition did he leave the work of his office that, on its reassembling, the Senate, though bereft of its guide, was enabled to proceed with the public business without interruption. Herein, to my mind, is a grander tribute to the *clerk* than can be paid by human lips.

But it is not the public official merely in whose praise we speak. We hold in most grateful remembrance the man; the man of high purpose; the man without reproach; the man in whose seventy-one years there was no winter because the spring of love and charity for his

kind dwelt forever in his heart. The fact that my experience is similar to that of many others will perhaps justify me in referring to the time when I first came to this chamber, "with all my imperfections on my head," and almost totally inexperienced in legislative procedure. Attracted by the light that beamed from his countenance, as many had done before, as many have done since, under like circumstances, I turned to Mr. GIFFORD in my perplexities, and in him I found a counsellor, a guide, a friend; a friend to whom, alas! I can never again acknowledge the debt of gratitude I owe. And it was not here, in the place of his labor, alone that his influence was felt. In every walk in life he commanded the respect, the admiration, the love of men. In the historic town in which he dwelt, whose name in later years has been given prominence by association with his own, he was the friend of all. The old, the young, hastened to do him honor. He held the chief place in their councils, and at their festivals. As their most distinguished citizen, he received the salutations of a continent, and at their firesides he was an ever welcome guest. To them

was known something of the sweetness of that inner life upon whose privacy we may not intrude to-day.

To their tender care, Mr. President, we have committed his mortal remains, reserving to ourselves the grateful duty, now reverently discharged, of perpetuating in the annals of the Commonwealth a shining example that shall for all time lend inspiration to those who aim to "serve or save the State."

Kind friend, farewell! May spirits as gentle as thine attend us "when the swift river bears us to the ocean."

Senator Howland of Plymouth.

It is with great hesitation that I attempt to say a word to-day, realizing as I do that I have not the knowledge of language to express the feelings of my heart in the manner that I ought to do on this occasion. Our departed friend, of whom we speak to-day, endeared himself to all who were acquainted with him. It was my fortune to be somewhat intimately acquainted with him, and I always found in him a sympathetic friend and wise counsellor.

As at times I have heard related the struggles of his early life, I have thought that they had much to do with his sympathy for those who had been and were deprived of the advantages of a liberal education. His early experiences seem to have filled his heart with sympathy towards those who had been deprived of that privilege.

I need not speak, Mr. President, of his universal courtesy and kindness towards all with whom he came in contact during his long service as clerk of this body. It is too well

known for me to add anything to it. In my own experience I can say that I always found him courteous and kind, ready to impart information and give assistance when it was desired, in a modest, unassuming and gentle manner. From the history of his life much may be learned.

Born in humble circumstances, becoming fatherless when a small boy, through his own exertions he obtained his education and won that place in public life which he filled with so much ability and efficiency. He was always an interested and earnest worker in all matters pertaining to the welfare of the town in which he resided, his counsels always being taken with great respect and confidence by his fellow townsmen.

By his death all associated with him have lost a tried friend and wise counsellor, his town a good and true citizen, and the State a faithful and efficient public servant.

Mr. President, I feel it would be wrong for me to detain the Senate further, knowing as I do that so many are desirous of adding their tribute to the memory of him who has left us.

Senator Nourse of Worcester.

We sometimes betray the narrowness of our mental vision, and dishonor our birthright, by thoughtlessly saying that the sturdy virtues of our Puritan ancestors no longer leaven our New England life. We malign our brethren, we falsely accuse ourselves, when we even suggest that the mantles of those virtuous fathers and mothers, who lived in the historic era of our Arcadian simplicity, have fallen upon degenerate sons and daughters in this age of complex social and political relations. No! In the enlightened civilization of a republic like ours, human graces find a congenial soil, and they flourish and bud and blossom in abundance, in infinite variety, and in all grades of society. Modest worth is nowhere a rarity among us. Sterling integrity is never exceptional. Dignified courtesy is not strange.

But when we see a man in whom the successive legislatures of three decades have placed implicit and unstinted trust, never disappointed; when we

see that man, although an ardent political partisan, making no enemies; when, though the incumbent of a very remunerative and honorable public office, yet year after year he has met no rival striving to supplant him; then indeed and in verity may we exclaim: O singular and fortuitous combination of moral and mental graces! O rare example of the typical gentleman! O model public servant, worthy the emulation of us all, worthy the lasting gratitude of the Commonwealth!

We mourn the loss of a benignant presence, but we have left to us treasure of gracious memories; memories of a beneficent life, a life rounding gracefully to its close, and entering into the Sabbath of eternal rest while yet the vital enjoyments, energies and forces were all unimpaired. That urbane companionship we have lost forever, but the fragrance of that companionship remaineth with us. Of that fragrance we are not bereft, even by the angel whom men call Death.

Senator Cogswell of Essex.

Mr. President, — The resolutions in honor of the memory of our old friend, Mr. Gifford, which have been offered by the committee appointed for that purpose, are most eloquent and fitting, and the remarks in support of them by the members of that committee, to which we have just listened, seem to me to leave nothing to be said in regard to their adoption. Yet I would like to say a word on this occasion. Our friend, after long and honorable public service, intelligently and courteously performed, has died at the sunset of his life with his harness on, yet with every official duty discharged in its fullest detail. Thus he died; thus would he have chosen to die.

Mr. President, an old, tried and honored public functionary has gone to "the undiscovered country." Every official legislative act of the last quarter century, by which Massachusetts has marked her part in the progress, in the civilization, and the great events of that momen-

tous period, has been attested by the signature of him whose memory we commemorate to-day, — "S. N. Gifford, Clerk." Governors have come and gone, Senates have assembled and adjourned, but he for more than twenty-eight consecutive years has stood at his post of duty here, the manly, the faithful, the dignified, the kind-hearted — aye, the big-hearted clerk of the Massachusetts Senate.

We have buried him, sir, on the shores of the sea he loved to look upon, and by which, when his cares of office were over, he loved to dwell. I can hardly persuade myself that he has gone from our sight forever, though mine eyes have seen him buried in the sands of the Cape.

Farewell, genial and beloved friend; farewell, the Commonwealth's long tried and ever faithful public servant; farewell, "S. N. Gifford, Clerk." God bless thy memory, and God help us to make and set as good an example of honest, faithful, intelligent and genial public service as thou hast!

"O tender heart that is still,
You will falter with trouble no more,
Nor know of the good or the ill
Of a frantic world's uproar!

"Clouds sail, and waters flow,
And our souls must journey on;
But it cannot be ill to go
The way that thou hast gone."

Senator Dunbar of Hampden.

We meet, Mr. President, to render honor to the memory and to pay a tribute to the character of Stephen N. Gifford; not in formal and perfunctory phrase of cold respect, recounting his years of service, the care, accuracy and fidelity of his work; not with adulation; not with the praise which, unmerited, is more unjust than censure; but out of the fulness of our emotions to say a few words for the benefit of those who had not the rare pleasure of his acquaintance, to indicate in what esteem and affection we who knew him held him. I know full well that nothing that we can say will add to or detract from his reputation, nor will increase or diminish in any degree the love and veneration with which his friends will cherish his memory; but we should be false to the dictates of our hearts if we did not strive in some imperfect way, some broken phrase, some feeble utterance, to give recognition of our appreciation of our loss.

Men do not greatly mourn the death of those

who are conspicuous only for ability, or wealth, or power. The life of no man is essential to the progress of the world; no matter how important the work in which he may be engaged, how broad and comprehensive may be his abilities, how skilful he may be in all the details of that work, if he has nothing else to recommend him to his fellow-men, his death will rouse no great or deep emotion. But it is hard to be reconciled to the death of a friend. We may bear the loss of prosperity with equanimity; but the wounds of the heart never heal. And so it is, Mr. President, that the memory of our friend will not fade with this generation.

Mr. GIFFORD was not a great man, as the world counts greatness. He accumulated no great wealth. He obtained no exalted public station. He strove neither for power nor for fortune. He had not those bold and aggressive qualities which compel success in the forum and in the mart. He was a modest, unassuming, genial, kindly gentleman, content to do his duty, but only content when that duty was well done. What his standard was, what rare ability, fidelity and conscience he brought to that work, we who have seen him in

its daily performance know, and the record for more than a quarter of a century bears witness. He had a clear and accurate mind and his opinions upon most subjects were reliable. They were also positive, but never offensively expressed. He had convictions and was not ashamed of them ; they were not thrust upon others, but they were tenaciously held. I have never in all my acquaintance seen a man to whom could more aptly be applied the lines of that beautiful ode from Horace beginning "*Justum ac tenacem propositi virum.*" He had a keen sense of humor. He truly loved a good story, of which he himself had great store. He was a skilful parliamentarian, well versed in all the mysteries of legislative procedure, the unfailing recourse of all inexperienced members and the prompter and assistant of many a presiding officer. He had that essential for good work, a love for it and a pride in its excellence. Who ever saw him with work carelessly done or dragging behind ? Who ever saw him impatient of anything but shams or injustice ? Who ever knew him too busy or too tired to lend assistance or counsel ? With such qualifications, with such a mind and temper, his election for so many

successive years as clerk of this Senate ceases to be surprising ; nor is it wonderful that he was the chosen arbiter and referee of all the disputes of his neighbors in his town of Duxbury.

And they loved him, those neighbors and friends. There were tears upon the faces of many, and sadness upon the faces of all, as we laid him to rest beneath that bright and cloudless sky, near the shore of that ever changeful but never changing sea, amid the beauty and the promise of the opening spring.

Upon a tablet on the wall of the church which he was accustomed to attend, and in which his funeral services were held, there are these words: "Mark the perfect man and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace." I can think of no word which more aptly characterizes his death. The summons came swiftly and suddenly, but he was ready. His work was done. There were no wrongs to be righted. There was no injustice to be atoned for. Respected, honored, loved, mourned, his death indeed was peace.

Senator Walker of Hampshire.

I would that to-day, upon this solemn occasion, Hampshire County were represented in the Senate by one who could fittingly express her sadness because of the death of one of her oldest and best friends, Mr. Gifford. Speaking just a word for myself, and for the senators from Hampshire who have preceded me during his many years of faithful service, I can safely say that none have been more indebted to him for the counsel and assistance which all new members need, — especially those whose previous education, experience and observation have not been of a character to make them familiar with the duties and responsibilities which must be assumed by all who come to the General Court of Massachusetts. Much have we received: gentle, almost affectionate consideration ; advice given with an interest like that which a parent might take in his child ; and, as I remember this, it is not strange that to me words seem inadequate to define our appreciation of his service in the past, our sorrow in the present, or

to tell how truly and how tenderly we shall cherish his memory until, God willing, we meet him again in the glory of the great world beyond. Dear old friend! Middlesex, Worcester, Plymouth, Essex, Hampden and other counties offer to you their eloquent tributes; but those of us who come from the hills and valleys of Hampshire ask only that we may weep with those who weep, and that we may sometimes bring our choicest flowers and lay them on your grave. Hail and farewell!

Senator Murphy of Suffolk.

I desire to say just one word upon these resolutions, although I doubt whether I can add anything to what has been said so feelingly and so eloquently by my brother Senators. I feel that there are men, whom, in times past, Massachusetts has mourned, who may perhaps in public life have gained position, whose memory will live longer among the masses of the people; but I believe, honestly, that no man in his walk, or in his sphere, by his actions and by his life, is better deserving of memory than he whose death we mourn here to-day. I have listened to what has been said of his public and his private life. Of his public life, as my personal experience goes, I cannot add one word to what has been said upon that particular portion. I, myself, like other Senators here, have been laid under obligations to him in the way of showing me the path along which I should follow, in order that I might know the technical portions of the duties which fell to my lot. During all my term of service in the legislature of

Massachusetts I have never heard one word other than that of praise when the name of the clerk — the former clerk — of this Senate was mentioned. If any one deserves credit, deserves honor, deserves remembrance, it is the man who does his duty by his fellow-men. And I believe that it can be safely claimed for the former clerk of this Senate that in that particular he has not been wanting.

In other lands and other countries, where progress moves with leaden wings, there is not that progress that we have here upon our side of the ocean.

In the period of years which marked his official life, near one-third of a century, what has been the march onward made by our nation and our people, has been fitly and eloquently expressed here to-day. His official life, to my mind, marks one important period in the history of the nation and in the history of the State. I allude to the time when Massachusetts for one moment — for it was but for one moment — wandered from the path which her fathers had trod so proudly and so grandly in the years before. But it was only for a moment that she faltered, and to-day it is

with pride that I say that in our State, the old Commonwealth of Massachusetts, between men who come from other lands, there are not those barriers which at one time threatened to divide them, and that which weighs the man to-day is not where he came from, what may be his religion, but be he a man, be he honest, be he true, be he worthy of the support of his fellow-citizens. During the official career of our late worthy clerk, the beginning and the end of it marked this great and wondrous change, — to my mind one of the proudest pages in the history of Massachusetts' proud life. No deeds or acts, in the ages that are to come, will shine so brightly and shine so grandly.

I think that the highest encomium that can be paid to Stephen N. Gifford is this, that he was a man, — a true American gentleman. From the first day that he took service of the State to the last, he was faithful to the trust imposed upon him, and we need no better substantiation of that fact than the unanimity, with which, year after year, he was re-elected to the place he so honored. It seems as if it were only yesterday, and I gaze upon his familiar face and his familiar form, in

perfect keeping with the surroundings of this old and this historic State House, and to-day he is no more.

I remember with pain and with sorrow, and with some pride, that the last action of his life was the affixing of his signature to the resolutions offered by myself in this Senate and accepted unanimously by this body — the resolutions of Home Rule. To my mind, it was an appropriate and a fit official ending to such a blameless official life. Resolutions sent from the proudest and the happiest of people on the earth in behalf of one of the lowliest and the most suffering that treads God's footstool.

He did his duty faithfully and well to the last, and when he laid down his official pen, it was to obey the beckoning hand of the angel of Death. He has gone from amongst us before the throne of the Great Master, and if there be any faults in his threescore and ten years of life, I believe the tears of the Recording Angel will wash them out.

Senator Morse of Norfolk.

I hardly feel, Mr. President, that I can add anything to what has been already said. But I recall the fact that the wisest man who ever lived, under Divine inspiration when Jehovah held the pen, wrote that "It is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting." Surely, when death comes so nearly as now, it is well to pause for a season, not only to pronounce words of eulogium upon our brother, who has left us "for that undiscovered country, for that bourne from whence no traveller returns," but it is well, also, Mr. President, to ponder on the solemn fact that we, too, are mortal, and have here "no continuing city," and that sooner or later our places, too, will be vacant; others will stand in our lot and do our business; for us, too, "the silver cord will be loosed, the golden bowl broken, and the pitcher broken at the fountain."

You remember, sir, that when Mr. Garfield was stricken down by the vilest assassin that

ever cursed the earth; when the surgeons gathered around him, Mr. Garfield asked one of them, "Doctor, is the wound mortal?" and you will remember the answer, "We fear the worst, Mr. Garfield." And said the great, good man, "Doctor, I am not afraid to die." Why not? Because he was at the post of duty.

Our brother who has left us met the "King of Terrors," we are told, calmly; and surely, like Mr. Garfield, at the post of duty. God grant to all of us who sit around this board, that when our summons, too, shall come "to join the innumerable caravan that moves to the pale realms of shade," we, too, may go,

> * * "not, like the quarry-slave at night,
> Scourged to his dungeon, but, sustained and soothed
> By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave
> Like one that wraps the drapery of his couch
> About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams."

The prophet Daniel once heard a voice. He heard a voice that spake to him and commanded him to "stand in his lot." This man, whose chair is vacant, "stood in his lot" for twenty-

nine years, a modest, unassuming servant of the State.

Did it ever occur to you, Mr. President, that men are wont to turn their thoughts into the records of the past for memories of noble lives and deeds, and forget the heroes of the present, and men who to-day stand in their lot, the sentiment expressed by my friend the Senator from Worcester? To illustrate: The student of ancient history loves to think of the three hundred Spartans who stood at the pass of Thermopylæ and there contested the advance of the immense Persian army. The Russian loves to think of Peter the Great, who laid aside the glories and splendors of his kingdom and took upon himself the garb and habiliments of his servant and travelled through all the length and breadth of all the Russias, mingling with the poor, despised and lowly, and then returned to his throne and set on foot measures to ameliorate the condition of his people; the Irishman loves to turn his thoughts into the records of the past and think of Robert Emmet, and sees him in his last and cruel trial. He marks the wrath of Lord Newbury as he propounds to him

the question: "Robert Emmet, is there any reason why sentence of death should not be pronounced upon you?" He hears him tell his executioners that the blood that they seek is not congealed with the artificial terrors that surround their victim. He hears him say that "There is no man that knows my motives who dare now vindicate them. Let my tomb remain uninscribed until my country takes its place among the nations of the earth," and "then, and not till then, let my epitaph be written." And to-day the hearts of his countrymen, in the mountains of Ireland, are inspired to engage in a well-nigh hopeless contest by the dying words of this young Irishman. And we Americans are no exception to the rule. We love to turn our thoughts into the records of the past, and think of Washington, the father of his country; we see him on that cold December night crossing the Delaware, or we see him at Valley Forge, shedding tears over his little band of soldiers, who marked the snow as they marched with their frosty, shoeless, bleeding feet.

But we have paused to-day, Mr. President, amidst our business, for a brief season to do

honor to a man who, though his name may not live in history like the three hundred Spartans, like Peter the Great, like Robert Emmet, or like George Washington, yet a man like them who stood in his lot, who did his duty, who loved this dear old Commonwealth of Massachusetts, who died in her service, and gave his life for her. God bless his memory!

Did you reflect, Mr. President, what the just are finally commended for, and what it is that goes to make up a grand and noble life? Not some great deed, like those that I recited. But for what? "I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat." It is the little events of life that go to make up character. "I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; naked and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me."

Not one man in one hundred thousand will be remembered by posterity and known to posterity; but we may all record deeds and acts like those of our brother, which are unknown to fame, but have been recited here to-day, that will stand when the Books are opened, when

the bronze has turned to dust, and when the canvas has faded.

I remember to have read a story of a poor old soldier, who was worn out in his country's service, and who, on his way back to his fatherland, took to playing the violin as a means to earn a living in the streets of Vienna. By and by this old man's sight became dimmed, his hand became palsied and tremulous, and he could no longer make music on his violin; and finally he sat down on the curbstone in tears, in want and hungry. There came along a stranger who said: "What is the matter?" And this soldier replied: "My hand trembles so that I cannot make any more music on my violin, and I am cold and in want and hungry." "Oh," said the stranger, "you are too old and feeble to play the violin, neighbor; give me the violin." And the stranger took the violin and began to play, and a crowd gathered round, and increased as he played on. Cheers rent the air, and some shouted and some wept. The stranger said to the old man: "I guess you had better pass your hat, old man." And he went round in the crowd and he filled his hat full. He did not expect to

have any money, and passed it to the stranger; but the stranger said: "Put the money in your pockets; I don't want any of it." And the stranger played again, with the same results, and then he left, and somebody in the crowd said: "Who is that? Who is the man that played the violin?" And said a man who knew him: "Didn't you know that man? That was Bucher, the great violinist, known throughout the realm of Austria." Bucher was a rich man, yet he assumed the old man's poverty, he bore the old man's degradation, he played the old man's violin. He became a street beggar to help the old man.

Now, what does this story bring to our minds? It suggests to us One who left his home in glory; One who was rich, and for our sake became poor. How ought our hearts to well up in gratitude; and how ought we to go out and imitate the example of our brother who is no more, by deeds and words and acts of kindness, and make an enduring and an everlasting record. A Quaker once wrote: "I expect to pass through this world but once; if, therefore, there be any kindness I can show to my fellow creatures, let

me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again." I believe that our brother in his life was animated by such a spirit as that of this Quaker. He left no word or deed of kindness unsaid or undone, for evidently he didn't expect to pass this way again.

Senator Joyner of Berkshire.

I regret that I have had no leisure to consider thoughts to express at this time. And yet, I have this consolation, for it seems to me we are filing in a single line past the bier of our dead clerk, and as we pass, each Senator, throwing his spray upon the coffin-lid, seeks to express some fitting tribute to the dead. But as we listen to these tributes, — just, appropriate, eloquent, — we can but feel that the deeper feelings of the Senate have not been expressed. Words have no language for the deepest sentiments of the heart.

We do not stand by the bier of one whom we love and vex the air with noisy words, but we stand rather in marble silence, feeling there is something that words cannot utter; that until words have power to restore to that vacant chair the living form of the dead, the eulogy is incomplete. And, sir, nothing that we can say will restore that life. The Divine speech that would quicken the dead will not be heard, and

so the eulogy of the orator, though it be eloquent as any to which we have listened, the elegy of the poet, though it be most graceful, will seem incomplete, inadequate.

As we cannot restore this life, I am led, listening here, to think of what was the lesson of that life. What, after all, was the secret of the success of this man? It was not because he had a clear head, a kind heart, good humor, gracious manners; not because he aided Senators in their work; but it was because he had found the work that he was fitted to do, — by nature fitted to do, — and that work he did. The lesson of his life is to seek out that employment for which we are qualified and then work in that employment.

There was, perhaps no other reason for his great success, as a clerk, unless it was, that while he knew his own business and wrought at his own business, he did not interfere with the business of others. He never stood upon the little pedestal to which Senators had elevated him, and from that pedestal sought to influence legislative action. Senators in the lobby, Senators in the committee room, were never button-holed

by this man. Whether it was public law or private law or constitutional amendment that was to be made, he ever remembered that, as a recording officer, it was not his duty to seek to interfere with legislators in their work. A worthy example, sir, perhaps, to many a man who may have held or still holds office beneath this dome. Having his duty to perform, knowing how to perform it, he made that his business and let other men's business alone. It was on this account that he clashed not with men on the sharpest points of their opinions, — political opinions; that he clashed not with legislators upon their pet schemes. He took no part in contests.

There is another lesson, sir, to be learned from the life and work of this man in this Senate chamber, a lesson that is alike a credit to him and an honor to the Senate. He held his place for twenty-nine years by the voluntary suffrages of forty intelligent men of the Commonwealth. He was not carried into the office as a mere follower on a State political ticket, but each year by the separate ballots of forty men he came to his place.

The lesson that I learn, and that the Senate may learn, from this is broader. It is that we need no half political, half pedagogic commission to secure fixedness of tenure of office; that we can trust to the people, — the intelligence of the common people, — to choose the right man for the right place, year after year, when they find him. We may say, sir, in the language of Lincoln at Gettysburg: "Men will little note, nor long remember, what we here say;" but as long as this thirty years' record of the doings of this Senate are preserved, as long as the Commonwealth shall endure, so long will this record, the work of Stephen N. Gifford, be a monument of the capacity of the people of Massachusetts, who lived through the great war period and for the twenty-five years that followed, for self-government.

Senator Howard of Bristol.

I rise to unite my voice with those members who have preceded me in paying this last tribute of respect to the memory of our distinguished and much lamented friend, Stephen N. Gifford. I deem it my part, coming here from the ranks of labor and representing a portion of Massachusetts' hard-toiling sons, to voice their sentiments in respect to the memory of him whose loss we mourn.

I had occasion to trouble him, but not frequently, to make out reports for me, and I always found that he treated me with as much kindness, respect and courtesy as that extended to the most distinguished members of this Senate. He possessed many of nature's noblest traits. I discovered that in the short time that I knew him, for he made no discrimination whatever between the cultured and wealthy men and those who came from the poorest ranks. I have frequently looked, in the past week, across this Senate chamber, and I have missed

that kind, genial and fatherly looking countenance, and it reminded me occasionally of the words I once heard as being uttered after the death of a celebrated Roman senator, when it was said his absence made him more conspicuous than his presence.

I stood in that little churchyard in Duxbury, and as I watched his family, his relatives, his numerous friends, descending the steps weeping bitterly over his loss, his manly sons sobbing like children in their hour of affliction, my heart went out in full sympathy to them and I had to brush away a tear of sorrow, though I tried to do it unseen by my brother Senators. I saw him laid in his grave almost beneath the shadow of the monument of Miles Standish, that brave, energetic and capable soldier of the Old Colony, and I thought that ere long his dust would commingle with that of those great men who are buried around him; those hardy pioneers who laid the foundation of this, the greatest country under heaven, the home of refuge for the oppressed and persecuted of all nations. He is gone; as my brother Senators have said, gone forever; but he has left his marks upon the page

of Massachusetts history and he has built for himself a monument in the hearts of all those with whom he was associated which time cannot efface.

I thought, when I saw those boys weeping, when I saw his weeping widow, that in his life-time he must have been a kind and loving husband, a good father, a generous friend, an honest man. He was, as I am told, a friend to all men. The world can pay him no higher eulogy. May his soul rest in eternal peace, is my earnest wish.

President Pillsbury.

Mr. President, — Our brethren who have already addressed the Senate have done full justice to the life and character of our honored and lamented friend, and I do not expect to add anything to the completeness of the tribute which, by them and by the resolutions of the committee, has already been so touchingly and gracefully paid to his memory. But my relations with him have been such and so close, especially during this and the last session of the legislature, and my respect for him was so deep and my friendship so strong, that I should do injustice to my own feelings if I omitted to lay my humble wreath with the rest upon his grave.

I was glad on coming into the Senate chamber this afternoon to find it dressed with the flowers which he loved. Their fragrance is like the fragrance of the memory which he has left behind him, and it is appropriate that the end of an honorable, complete and rounded career like his should be crowned with garlands

of flowers rather than with the emblems of mourning.

The Senate chamber of Massachusetts is the place in which to pronounce the eulogy of Stephen N. Gifford. He was more identified with this place than with any other, and he was more identified with it than any other man. His career as clerk of this body was remarkable in many respects. It is safe, I think, to say that in length of continuous service it exceeds anything known in the history of the government of this Commonwealth; and the length of his service is a sufficient testimony, if other testimony were wanting, to the character and the quality of the work which he did here. He served the Senate as its recording officer through twenty-eight years, and into the twenty-ninth, and during all that time, so far as I know, his tenure of office was never disturbed by so much as a rumor. His election and re-election were always foregone; and while each assembling Senate went through the form, as it must, it was well understood to be only a form, and that the Senate of Massachusetts would never think of parting with so efficient,

so faithful an officer and servant while he remained able to continue in its service.

He was in almost all respects a model clerk. If he erred at all, it was from excess of caution and on the side of safety. Without what I should call a legal mind or a mind especially adapted to deal with intricacies and technicalities, he had what perhaps was better, — an instinct for parliamentary law; an instinct which, superadded to his familiarity with the routine and business of the Senate, gained in his long period of service, made him not only an invaluable recording officer, but of the greatest assistance to the presiding officer. And if there is anything which I desire to specially emphasize to-day, since it happens that here and at this time my voice is the only one which can bear this testimony, it is that he has laid every presiding officer of the Senate during his time under obligations which will not soon be forgotten. And I ought to add, — because it was most characteristic of him, — that he never seemed to make any display of superior knowledge and never obtruded his advice. Indeed his advice, when asked, was given with

a diffidence and modesty that evidently were not affected but were felt.

His personal characteristics most apparent to his friends, and equally apparent indeed to those who had only a casual acquaintance with him, were his geniality of temperament and manner, and a keen sense and unfailing fund of humor. It was these qualities that attached his friends to him and made almost every man and woman and child who ever made his acquaintance regard him with feelings of personal friendship. Situated in this public position as he was during an entire generation, he probably met and made the acquaintance of more citizens of Massachusetts than any man now living, and that he is followed to his grave by the regard and regret of every one of these I need not say to you who knew him.

I have listened with interest for any allusion by our brethren of the Senate to that which is almost always a subject of remark on occasions like this, — his religious character or his opinions upon religious topics. We need not hesitate to speak of this. Mr. Gifford was not, in the popular sense, a religious man, — by which I

mean that he was not accustomed very rigidly to observe the forms and ceremonials of religious belief or worship. But in my view he was a religious man in a better sense. If he had been asked for a statement of his creed, I think he might have expressed it much as it was expressed by Pope in the lines with which you are familiar:

> "For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight;
> His can't be wrong whose life is in the right."

This, I think, was his creed, and that he made this vital in his daily walk and life his friends will remember. I cannot feel, Mr. President, that this is so much an occasion for mourning as for rejoicing. He lived a tranquil, a contented and happy life. He was spared, as he always desired to be, in the full enjoyment of all his faculties almost to the last moment, to die at his post of duty, having passed through a serene old age, surrounded, as the poet says,

> "With all that should accompany old age,
> As honor, love, obedience, troops of friends."

L. of C.

We went down, the other day, to the home which he loved, and there laid his body in the ground ; but his better part is still with us, in the tender memories of his friends and in the sincere and lasting regard of the people of the State which he served so long and so well.

The Resolutions were adopted by a rising vote, and thereupon the Senate adjourned.

Stephen Nye Gifford was born in Pembroke, Massachusetts, July 21, 1815. By the death of his father, he was left at the age of ten, with an older brother and his mother, in very straitened circumstances. Until he was fifteen years old he worked on a farm for his board and clothes, attending school two or three months in the year. He then for a time worked at shoemaking, but his health becoming impaired, he resolved to obtain a better education in order to enter the profession of teaching, and attended the academies at Hanover and Bridgewater, paying his way by working at his trade out of school hours. He began teaching in the common schools, and after some years established a private school in the town of Duxbury. He was a member of the House of Representatives for the year 1850, and in 1851 was appointed an inspector in the Boston Custom House, which office he held two or three years. In 1854 he was for a brief time Assistant Clerk to the Senate, and in the following year was appointed Assistant Clerk of the House. The same year he was chosen by the Legislature, State Auditor, and again became Assistant Clerk of the House in 1857, and the following year was chosen Clerk of the Senate, which office he held until his death at Duxbury, April 18, 1886.

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